



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Patent and Trademark Office

Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------

09/004,827 01/09/98 PAGE

L S96-213

026615
HARRITY & SNYDER, LLP
11240 WAPLES MILL ROAD
SUITE 300
FAIRFAX VA 22030

TM02/1205

EXAMINER

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2171

DATE MAILED:

12/05/00

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/004,827

Applicant(s)

Page

Examiner

Uyen Le

Group Art Unit
2171



☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Sep 20, 1900

☐ This action is **FINAL**.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claims

☒ Claim(s) 18-25, 28, and 36-45 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) 18-25, 28, and 36-45 is/are rejected.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been

☐ received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

☒ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

--- SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ---

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 18-25, 28, 36-45 are in this application.
2. Applicant's arguments regarding claims 18-25, 28, 36, 37 have been fully considered but they are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection presented in this Office Action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

3. Claims 18, 25, 28, 38-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Ishikawa et al (US 5,848,407).

Claim 18 merely reads on the method of Ishikawa scoring documents according to their reference relationships (see the abstract, column 2, line 65- column 3, line 8). The claimed linking document is met by the parent document. The claimed linked document is met by the hypertext document. The claimed assigning a score to each of the linked documents based on scores of the one or more linking documents is met when Ishikawa shows that the ranking of a particular hypertext document can be determined by considering the particular parent documents having the reference relationships with the particular hypertext document (see column 4, lines 26-30). The claimed processing the linked documents according to their scores is met when Ishikawa shows that documents are ranked and presented to users (see Figure 3).

Claim 25 essentially recites the same limitations of claim 18 with the exception of assigning a score to one selected linked document instead of assigning a score to each of the linked documents as recited in claim 18. The scope of claim 25 is encompassed

Art Unit: 2171

by the scope of claim 18. Therefore, claim 25 is rejected for the same reasons stated in claim 18 above.

Regarding claim 28, Ishikawa discloses a computer implemented method of ranking a plurality of linked documents (see the abstract). Claim 28, lines 3-6 merely read on the well known fact that documents are referencing one another in the Web (see column 2, lines 30-32). The claimed generating an initial estimate of a rank for each of the linked documents is met when Ishikawa shows that an importance degree of each hypertext is estimated to meet a user's retrieval request and hypertext documents are ranked according to their estimated values (see column 2, lines 41-50). Ishikawa clearly teaches the concept of updating the rank of each linked document using ranks for the linking documents when Ishikawa shows that the ranking of a particular hypertext document can be determined from the parent document having the reference relationships with the particular hypertext document (see column 4, lines 26-30). The claimed processing the linked documents according to their updated ranks merely reads on the fact that the hypertext document is processed according to the importance degrees of the unified hypertext document and displayed (see Figure 3, column 4, lines 5-13).

Regarding claims 38, 39, Ishikawa clearly shows displaying the links to the linked documents as a directory listing and displaying annotations representing the score of each of the linked documents(see Figures 4, 5).

Regarding claim 40, Ishikawa clearly shows that the annotations are text (see Figure 5).

Regarding claim 41, Ishikawa discloses textual matching (see column 3, lines 46-59).

Regarding claim 42, Ishikawa discloses matching anchor text associated with the links (see Figure 4, column 3, lines 9-19).

Regarding claim 43, Ishikawa discloses processing the linked documents based on groupings of the linked documents when Ishikawa shows that retrieval results are displayed to the user (see Figure 3).

Claim 44 corresponds to a computer program product to perform the method of claim 18, thus is rejected for the same reasons stated in claim 18 above.

Claim 45 differs from claim 44 by "searching" a plurality of documents instead of "obtaining " a plurality of documents as recited in claim 44. Ishikawa clearly shows that the user is searching a plurality of documents on the Web (see the abstract). Therefore, claim 45 is rejected for the same reasons stated in claim 44 above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 19, 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishikawa et al (US 5,848,407).

Regarding claim 19, although Ishikawa does not explicitly show a weighing factor for each of the linking document, the weighing factor being dependent on the number of

Art Unit: 2171

links to the one or more linking documents and adjusting the score of each linking document based on the weighing factor, Ishikawa clearly teaches the concept of weighing factor and adjusting the score of the linking documents when Ishikawa shows that the documents have reference relationships (see column 4, lines 26-30). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include this feature in the method of Ishikawa in order to take into account the number of hypertext documents related to a parent document.

Claim 23 merely reads on the fact that it is well known in the art to assign importance degrees to a document as shown by Ishikawa (see the abstract). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include a weighing factor dependent on the importance, visibility or textual emphasis of the links in the linking document and adjusting the score of the linking document as claimed in order to take into consideration the importance of the parent document in the method of Ishikawa.

5. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishikawa et al (US 5,848,407), in view of applicant's admitted prior art.

Regarding claim 20, although Ishikawa does not explicitly show identifying a weighing factor dependent on an estimation of a probability that a linking document will be accessed, it is well known in the art that users typically jump to a different place in the web after following a few links as admitted by applicant at page 12, line 19 of the specification. Note applicant merely models well known typical users behavior. The fact that users typically jump to a different place in the web after following a few links is not

Art Unit: 2171

applicant's invention but a mere well known users behavior. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include a weighing factor dependent on an estimation of a probability that a linking document will be accessed and adjusting the score of the linking document in the method of Ishikawa in order to take into consideration typical users' behavior of jumping while surfing the Web.

6. Claims 21, 22, 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishikawa et al (US 5,848,407), in view of Egger et al (US 5,832,494).

Claims 21, 22 merely read on the well known fact shown by Egger that a Web site is considered more important than a single document (see column 50, lines 32-34). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the claimed features in order to take into consideration the status of the parent document while implementing the method of Ishikawa.

Regarding claim 24, although Ishikawa does not explicitly show a weighing factor for each of the linking document, the weighing factor being dependent on a particular user's preference, the rate at which users access the linking document or the importance of the linking document and adjusting the score of each linking document based on the weighing factor, it is well known in the art as shown by Egger to count the number of visits to a site, to give one type of document more importance than another type and to weigh the number of hyperlink within a page (see column 50, lines 22-41). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the

Art Unit: 2171

claimed features as shown by Egger in the method of Ishikawa in order adjust the score of a parent document based on a desired criteria.

7. Claims 36, 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over applicant's admitted prior art, in view of Egger et al (US 5,832,494).

Claim 36 merely reads on the fact that users typically jumps to a different place in the web after following a few links as admitted by applicant at page 12, line 19 of the specification. Note applicant merely models well known typical users behavior. The fact that users typically jumps to a different place in the web after following a few links is not applicant's invention but a mere well known users behavior. Furthermore, Eggers clearly teaches the concept of assigning a rank to the linked document that is dependent on the number of times the linked documents has been traversed when Eggers show that the document most visited has a greater weighing factor (see column 50, lines 30-39). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the claimed features of performing a random traversal of the linked documents, assigning a rank to the linked document dependent on the number of times the linked document has been traversed and processing the linked documents according to their rank in order to take into consideration the mostly visited linked documents in the method of prior art.

Regarding claim 37, since it is well known in the art that a user typically jumps to another site after following a few links, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include a predetermined probability that the next linked document to be

Art Unit: 2171

traversed will be a random one of the plurality of linked documents in the method of the prior art in order to model different user's behaviors.

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Uyen T Le whose telephone number is 703-305-4134. The examiner can normally be reached on M-T 7:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas Black can be reached on 305-9707. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 308-9051 for all communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 305-9000.

UL
November 30, 2000


THOMAS BLACK
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100